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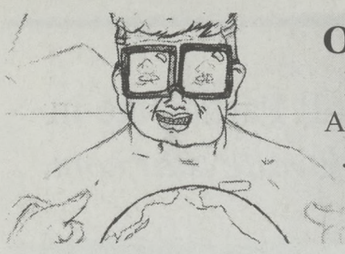

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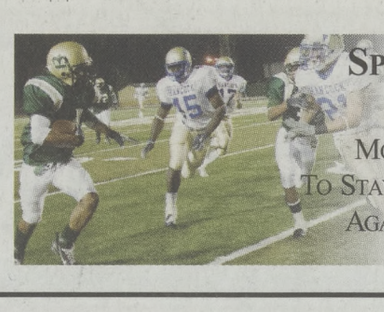

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VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

VOLUME 65, ISSUE NO. 5 | OCTOBER 25, 2006 | IT'S *YOUR* NEWSPAPER

2 Valley Students Arrested

BY ANA KACZMAREK
NEWS EDITOR

Around 10:30 p.m. on Oct. 10, two Valley College students were pulled over and arrested on suspicion of armed robbery in North Hollywood and police believe they committed many more crimes.

The North Hollywood Division of the LAPD picked up John Anthony Elizondo, 18, and Clinton DeShawn Gorman, 18, after they allegedly performed a robbery at gunpoint.

Senior Lead Officer Mike Lewis confirmed the report, saying, "We think that they are responsible for at least 20 crimes from North Hollywood, Hollywood, and Van Nuys divisions."

He described their typical alleged crime as following a pizza delivery person to his drop-off point and then robbing him at gunpoint. The other alleged crimes include street robberies, such as the taking of money and valuable property from pedestrians.

Lewis also assessed that he suspects Gorman and Elizondo have been committing these crimes for the past three or four months.

"You have to assume they're innocent until proven guilty," said Yasmin Delahoussaye, vice president of student services. She stressed that at 18, people make mistakes and should be given a second chance, especially to attend school.

Valley's code of conduct policy applies only to on campus incidents, according to Delahoussaye.

The students are currently enrolled at Valley, although records show they stopped going to class after the third and fourth weeks of instruction.

Gorman, who is enrolled in six units, was arrested for three felony counts of armed robbery and is currently being held on $150,000 bail at "The Ranch," formally known as the Pitchess Detention Center in Castaic, CA.

"It's just so sad," said Tracy Baca, a child development professor and Gorman's instructor. "It just concerns me that our students, that's the path they're taking."

Elizondo was arrested on two felony counts of armed robbery, and posted $10,000 bail, and was released Oct. 11 at approximately 1 p.m. He is enrolled in nine units and was on campus Oct. 19 trying to make up work for his time missed in class.

"It's just an eerie feeling to know that we don't know who our students are in reality," said Chicano studies assistant professor Pete Lopez, one of Elizando's instructors. "In our class we may have rapists, burglars or armed robbers. That's unsettling, to say the least."

Gorman and Elizondo are awaiting preliminary hearings

see *'Arrest'* page 3

ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR

STUMPING FOR STUDENTS - Gubernatorial candidate Phil Angelides addresses Valley College students and faculty about how he plans to promote education in California with Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack.

Angelides Rallies Students

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Phil Angelides visited Valley College Thursday for a town hall meeting and discussed education, health care and opponent, Gov. Schwarzenegger. Over 100 people filled the Fireside Room in Monarch Hall to hear Angelides speak.

State Assembly member Lloyd Levine; Democratic candidate for State Controller, John Chiang; and Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack were all on hand to lend their support to the current state treasurer.

While Angelides focused on issues surrounding education, he also took questions from the audience that ranged from universal healthcare to the environment and the veracity of the Schwarzenegger campaign's ads against him.

Angelides insisted that ensuring everyone has access to an affordable education is paramount to keeping California prosperous.

"Our future is dependent on the quality of education we give to our young people, the number of young people who have a chance to go to college, and our willingness to use our wealth to create wealth for future generations," he said.

After quoting a national survey, which found that since Schwarzenegger took office California has dropped from twenty-ninth to forty-seventh on the list of smartest states, Governor Vilsack said, "Its about strengthening the California community. Government is a part of community and if it doesn't do its job, than that child doesn't have quite the future."

Levine reiterated the need for affordable college education.

"The governor, the governor's record and the Republican rhetoric is no new taxes. And they run around yelling, 'no new taxes,' but they've increased the fees on college students over 200 percent over the last two or three years; that's a tax on college students," he said. "So saying, 'we're not going to raise taxes,' is very disingenuous."

David Nazari, a Valley student and treasurer of Democracy Matters, put college-fee increas-

see *'Angelides'* page 3

Campus Abuzz Over Faculty Confrontation

BY ANA KACZMAREK
NEWS EDITOR

With rumors circulating the faculty lounge, few details have emerged about why speech instructor Jack Sterk has been absent from Valley College this semester. Sterk has been a prominent face on campus for 35 years, serving as webmaster, budget committee chair and president of the Academic Senate, among other positions.

At an Oct. 19 Academic Senate meeting, senate President Shannon Stack explained to the faculty that Sterk has been on extended medical leave since the summer and that his senate position would be temporarily taken over.

However, Sterk is being administratively involuntarily transferred to Pierce College beginning Spring 2007 and a grievance is pending arbitration on that decision, according to AFT Chapter President Joanne Waddell. Depending on the outcome of the arbitration, Sterk may return to campus after his leave is over.

Hands came up, as instructors wanted to know more about a May 25, 2006 incident involving Sterk and English instructor Deborah Harrington. "It all seems like a big taboo," said Kathleen Sullivan, director of DSPS.

According to various documents obtained by the Valley Star, a confrontation between Sterk and Harrington occurred a few days following Harrington's win of the budget committee chair seat on the College Council. Sterk was also in the running. A report on the incident states, "Mr. Sterk behaved in a threatening and an aggressive manner, using physical intimidation against a colleague and a staff member."

Witness testimonies corroborate Harrington's account of the incident, while "Sterk's 'recollection of the incident was milder regarding his aggressiveness.'" Students, contractors and college employees saw the event, including Jeanne Rubin, executive assistant to the president.

In a statement, Rubin wrote that she intervened after hearing what she called "a man screaming very loudly" from her office in the Administration Building. As she approached the Arcade, she noticed Sterk "face to face" with Harrington, "with his elbow cocked back and his hand balled into a fist."

Sterk was allegedly screaming obscenities and telling Harrington that he would "ruin" her career at Valley while blocking her exit with his body, according to Harrington.

"She looked so terrified," said Rubin of Harrington. "She was cowering."

"What happened to me was probably one of the worst things that have ever happened to me," said Harrington in a phone interview, who is on personal leave and has taken a position as a dean at a different college. "I would like to say that I have found some way to handle this in some way that works all the time, and it just doesn't."

The police report noted that Sterk "had grabbed both of her [Rubin's] arms in frustration," after Harrington left the scene. "I don't think he meant to hurt me," said Rubin. "I don't think I was the object of his rage."

When the Sheriff arrived, Rubin told him that everything was OK and later said, "I didn't want Mr. Sterk to get arrested." The parties went to different locations following the deputy's advice. There were no criminal charges filed.

Waddell said Sterk's medical leave is the reason he is not on campus. She did not know if she could discuss the connection between Sterk's transfer to Pierce and the incident.

Speech Professor Joshua Miller, a former student and mentee of Sterk, said in an interview, "Sometimes his relationships can

see *'Sterk'* page 3

Latino Heritage Celebrated on Campus

BY WILL REYES
EDITOR IN CHIEF

With a variety of music blasting from the speakers and the smell of steak barbecuing in the air, Monarch Square was the scene for many students to enjoy the latest Latino Heritage Day this past Wednesday at Valley College.

The event, which took place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., was organized by the ASU to recognize and celebrate the deep-rooted history of Latinos. The day featured traditional Aztec dancers, Latino-owned business vendors and food provided by MEChA.

"[The celebration] was great," said Silvia Jimenez, the ASU'S evening division commissioner and event coordinator. "We had the three vendors and all the clubs came out … MEChA was amazing and the Aztec dancers were very impressive."

The Aztec dancers performance was the highlight of a day that drew dozens of students, as the six-person group excitedly invited onlookers to join them during their 30-minute show.

"I enjoyed [the dancers] show," said ASU President Narine Jugharyan, who eagerly stepped in on the performance. "I'm a dancer [myself] and I really liked it."

The vendors, which included a Chicano clothing company and a bookstore called Tia Chucha's Café Cultural, were also there to show the level of creativity and opportunity in the Latino community.

"We're a space where art and minds meet for a change," said Silverio Pelayo, who works for Tia Chucha's. "We have socially conscious, indigenous and children's books…we're trying to promote reading and literature in the Latino community."

Tia Chucha's table featured books from multiple Latino authors, including Luis Rodriguez's international best-seller "Always Running." The table caught the attention of a lot of Valley students, drawing a positive reaction from Pelayo, who said one of their main goals is to educate Latinos of the talent present within themselves.

"If you can reach a Latino person who might not usually read, and show them that there are great Latino writers, it can hopefully make a difference and inspire new writers," said Pelayo.

Taking place during Valley's weekly Club Day, the celebration was also bolstered by the presence of the many clubs, led by MEChA's contribution of both the food and the dancers, which they helped bring.

"I'm really happy with how things turned out," said Karen Linares, MEChA's co-chair. "The Aztec dancers showed up and we had a nice crowd…I think [the celebration] was successful."

DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

DOING THEIR DANCE - Aztec dancers perform a traditional dance at the Latino Hertiage Festival in Monarch Square while people look on.

OPINION

■ Make your voice heard! Participate in the online poll at *www.lavalleystar.com*

AN OPINION

Violence Begets More Violence

BY JESSICA SHAFFER
STAFF WRITER

Walk into many public high schools in America and you will see metal detectors, bars on the windows and even police, yet despite these measures there were three fatal school shootings between Sept. 26 and Oct. 2, 2006.

With the recent rash of school shootings, many people are panicking about increasing security measures on school campuses, but what more can schools do to ensure student safety? Experts agree that school shootings are almost impossible to predict.

In Wisconsin, Republican Representative Frank Lasse went on national television Oct. 6 and announced that he will push his controversial proposal to allow instructors to carry guns in school.

"[We need to do this] To make our schools safe for our students to learn, all options should be on the table," Lasse said. "Israel and Thailand have well-trained teachers carrying weapons and keeping their children safe from harm. It can work in Wisconsin."

Can anybody say 'bad idea'? Students could easily ambush the instructor and take the weapon or remove it from where they kept it. Even locked cabinets can be broken into.

I thought we were trying to keep guns out of schools not in them.

And what are teachers supposed to do if a teenager comes into the school with a gun? Even if they are trained to use the weapon, they are not a SWAT team. They are not trained to handle a deranged child.

A gun is not a shield; it is just an opportunity to for the teacher to shoot back and that will lead to more harm.

Also, students are not the only people attacking schools. Both the attack on the Amish school in Pennsylvania and the attack on the school in Colorado were committed by adults. Teachers are people like anybody else and are subject to the same types of emotions, including the violent ones.

Schools are already enough like prisons with the metal detectors, bars, police, random checks by drug dogs, and special passes for visitors. We shouldn't make going to school become more of a punishment than an opportunity for kids.

School shootings are fairly rare in the United States and school violence overall has dropped since the previous decade. According to the U.S. Justice Department, in 2004 students had a 14 percent chance of having a violent crime occur at their school Children are much more likely to be murdered around their home than in school. These drastic measures are unnecessary.

Nobody is saying that precautions are not important, but making schools more defensive is the answer. Schools need to be aware of the problem, watch for warnings signs and most importantly they need to have good lockdown procedures.

The shooter in Cazenovia, Wisconsin, who was a student seeking revenge, only killed one teacher because the school went into lockdown before he could get to anybody else.

Schools need to be a place where students feel safe to be educated, and allowing teachers to have guns will not make anything safer. It will just contribute to the problem.

AN OPINION

North Korea: A Nuclear Threat

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL PARA / VALLEY STAR

The world changed when North Korea announced the success of its nuclear test on Oct. 9. The thought of a nuclear North Korea is much more frightening than the threat of terrorist attacks.

We have been living in a world that was secure in the knowledge that, at the very least, the risk of nuclear war ended with the fall of the Soviet Union. If North Korean President Kim Jong Il were to detonate a nuclear device, the consequences would be unimaginable.

Before the test, the North's Korean Central News Agency said, "A people without reliable war deterrent are bound to meet a tragic death and the sovereignty of their country is bound to be wantonly infringed upon."

It goes on to blame the United States for the imminent test. "The U.S. extreme threat of a nuclear war and sanctions and pressure compel the [Democratic People's Republic of Korea] to conduct a nuclear test, and essential process for bolstering nuclear deterrent, as a corresponding measure for defense."

Kim Jong Il did not learn the lessons of the Cold War. Once one nation develops nuclear weapons, other nations are going to feel the need to defend themselves from the perceived threat to their own livelihood. Because it will threaten other nations in the region, this nuclear test combined with the launch of seven ballistic missiles, including one long-range missile, has decreased the security of North Korea.

In his press conference a few days after the nuclear test, President Bush said, "So, in response to North Korea's provocation, we'll increase defense cooperation with our allies, including cooperation on ballistic missile defense to protect against North Korean aggression, and cooperation to prevent North Korea from exporting nuclear and missile technologies."

This could start a new nuclear arms race, in fact, based on the president's statement, it may have already begun. The last thing the world needs, particularly with so much instability around the globe, is the increased development of such destructive weapons.

North Korea has proven they have the technology that could potentially kill millions of people. I don't trust anyone, regardless of who they are, to have access to such destructive technology. The condemnation from around the world is proof of how volatile this situation is.

Although both China and Russia were reluctant to impose sanctions on North Korea, both nations voted for the U.N. Security Council's resolution, which imposes the sanctions.

The Security Council's resolution states that the test is a challenge "to international efforts aimed at strengthening the global regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the danger it poses to peace and stability in the region and beyond."

In addition to imposing sanctions, the resolution also "decides that the DPRK shall abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner."

North Korea now claims to regret the nuclear test. Kim Jong Il told a Chinese official, "If the U.S. makes a concession to some degree, we will also make a concession to some degree, whether it be bilateral talks or six-party talks."

Does Kim Jong Il expect the existence of a nuclear weapon to serve as a deterrent, or is it the threat that he will use it that he feels should warn other nations?

Regardless of what motivated the north's nuclear test, the world became a more frightening place the second the North Koreans tested a nuclear device. I was too young to remember the fear of the arms race during the Cold War, but I am beginning to understand the mindset during that period.

Campus View

PHOTOS BY DANIEL KANE
TEXT BY WILL REYES

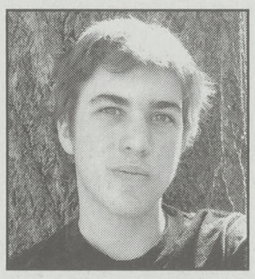
Do You Think Convicted Felons Should Be Allowed To Attend Community College Classes?

"Definitely, I don't see why they should be prohibited from receiving an education just because of a mistake they made in their past."

Wanda Vasquez
Psychology/ Culturual Antropology

""No, definitely not. It would endanger the other students and be unfair. I wouldn't want to attend a college with convicted felons."

Darlene Hilton-Bird
Linguistics



"Yes, because they are just like anybody else. They deserve a second chance."

Jacob Hayman
Undecided

"Yes, but it depends on what they did. If they're rapists or sexual offendors then they shouldn't be allowed"

Marina Bellose
Nursing

STAFF EDITORIAL

Do Your Part in Keeping Valley Clean

Colleges across the United States are developing successful student-run recycling programs, so why is Valley College struggling to get ours off the ground?

Our relatively small, 17,000-student campus is barely reaching the minimum requirement imposed by a state mandate, which makes institutions recycle 50 percent of industrial waste, despite numerous attempts to create an effective recycling program.

Just last semester, ASU's commissioner of environmental affairs teamed up with Plant Facilities Director Tom Lopez to implement a test program that encompassed all types of paper, and although the program "appears to be working," according to Vice President of Administrative Services Tom Jacobsmeyer, the receptacles are in only six campus buildings.

So why not place more recycling bins in more buildings? Administrators attribute it to a need for student involvement. As students at Valley, we need to take pride in our campus and prove to the administrators that we are self-motivated and care about our environment.

On a 17,000-student, 800-faculty member campus, if each of us spends only a third of our time at school, that averages out to 26,000 pounds of waste being produced on campus each day.

With the high turnover of students every semester, administrators must know that there are not only students who will help develop the program, but that there will also be new students to take it over every few semesters.

Lopez suggested that for a student-run recycling program to work there would be a need for only 42 student volunteers – that's one out of every 404 students. With 42 student volunteers Lopez says that each team of two students could be assigned to one of 21 buildings to stop by once a week and pick up the recycling – only once a week!

Recycling preserves natural resources, conserves energy, prevents pollution and protects the environment, but Valley students are missing out on the opportunity to do their part in making their planet and own campus cleaner.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the average person produces more than 4.4 pounds of waste each day. On a 17,000-student, 800-faculty-member campus, if each of us spends only a third of our day at school, that averages out to 26,000 pounds of waste being produced on campus each day.

Go to the ASU in Campus Center 102 and tell them you want to help set up a recycling program, ask what you can do. Or at the very least, the next time you're finished with paper or a recyclable container, look around for a yellow bin.

LETTERS

The Valley Star tries to print as many letters from its readers as possible. Letters shouldn't exceed 300 words or they may be edited for space and must include the author's name, major and connection to Valley College and contact information.

Show Some School Spirit

Re: "Valley's Homecoming is Nothing to Celebrate" by Jessica Shaffer; (Oct. 13, 2006)

Valley College is meant to be a place to promote higher education and encourage a sense of community amongst the student body. As an alumna, the best memories I have involve being in the ASU and the Valley Collegiate Players. Being involved made my experience here at Valley unforgettable due to the many people I've met and also the various challenges I've faced.

One of the challenges that is still present on this campus is the matter of student apathy. For those few dedicated ASU students who are planning student events, the challenges of advertising and getting students to show up is a difficult process. Negativity toward those who are trying their best to promote community on this campus should not be discouraged. The events are meant to promote culture awareness, student socialization and community.

Events such as homecoming, the Fine Arts Festival, Spring Games, club days, etc. are just a few events that the ASU sponsors. The ASU has a [limited] budget that goes toward all these events. The money used for such events is taken from the $7 ASU fee paid by students; if the money were spent toward anything else besides students it would be illegal.

"I take classes and work on campus, and the last thing I want to do is spend my free time here." (Excerpt from Shaffer's article.) This type of comment is common among those who haven't encountered the wonderful people who are on campus and experience the rewarding feeling of contributing back to the community. It's time to start collaborating and become part of the solution of student apathy, not the problem! And the first step that must be taken is to GET INVOLVED!!

Theresa Chavez
Alumna

I was reading the Valley Star published Oct. 11 and I couldn't help noticing the article "Valley's Homecoming is Nothing to Celebrate" – A very bold assumption by one of our own writers.

The first thing that struck me was "How negative?" How can someone have nothing better to write about than predicting, and siding with the idea, that the school is going to fail? I am willing to bet that the majority of students who pick up the Valley Star do so because they are curious to see what the school is about and what's going on here, not to read about what sucks. If the writer does not have anything positive to base her article on, what does that tell other people about the school itself? After all, it is an opinion, and a very narrow-minded one at that.

In her article Jessica Shaffer writes, "The football team lost their past three games, and chances are there will not be much to celebrate this Homecoming." What a chop? This may be true, but does it make you feel better to "kick 'em when they're down"? This is the school you attend, so why use your voice to trash it? Maybe if the football team had more support along with school events they would do better. But using time, energy and research to dissuade student interest only results in, yeah, lack of student interest!

Elizabeth Hensley
Theater Major
VCP Vice President
Lion's Den Employee

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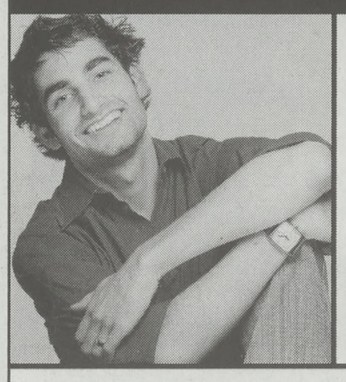

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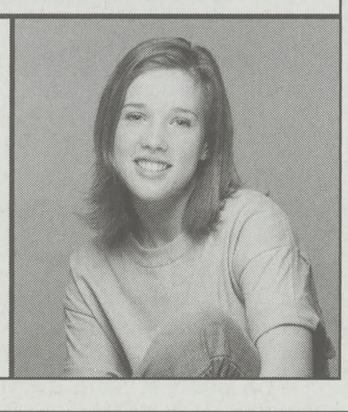

'Angelides'

continued from page 1

es into perspective.

"In isolation, it seems like it's not a big problem, but really this is on top of the soaring price of real estate, and just having an apartment, having a place to live, food to eat and this is an added tax on top of it," Nazari said.

An angry heckler interrupted Angelides when he first addressed the crowd with shouts of "Stop taxing the little people. You Democrats break the little people's back," Angelides said that, as governor, he would ask people who make more than $500,000 and more to pay more taxes. He also said he would close loopholes in the tax law that allows billion dollar companies to not pay a state income tax.

After the meeting, Diana Jimenez, a sociology major, said, "He has my vote, I want someone I can trust in office."

'Arrest'

continued from page 1

on their charges, which could put them in jail for a long time, according to Lewis.

Lewis said it was possible that the difference in bail on the two suspects suggests that Elizondo played a lesser role and was perhaps not in possession of a gun.

Both face a tougher penalty if convicted due to California Penal Code Section 12022, which states that the use of a firearm in a crime adds a mandatory sentence of one year, even for those not in possession of the weapon.

Elizondo declined to comment and Gorman could not be reached for comment.

IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF THEFT, VIOLEN CRIME OR SEXUAL ASSUALT, PLEASE REPORT THE INCIDENT TO THE VALLEY COLLEGE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, LOCATED IN THE MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS BUILDING. YOU MAY CALL (818) 947-2911 OR DIAL *80 FROM ANY CAMPUS PAYPHONE.

'Sterk'

continued from page 1

get antagonistic because if he sees something wrong, he'll confront it. He doesn't hesitate to do that with administration or other faculty members."

He also praised Sterk for his support and advocacy for students and faculty on campus. "The Speech Department unanimously sent a letter in support of him because he was a great asset to the department," said Miller.

Harrington recalled that she perceived her and Sterk's relationship to be on good terms prior to the election.

Sterk, who said he would "love" to give an interview, responded in an e-mail that he was advised by his union representative to not speak with the press prior to the arbitration hearing.

"It's unfortunate that we had such an incident between our faculty," said Valley President Tyree Wieder. "Some individuals have expressed concern to me about the importance of having a campus that doesn't tolerate any kind of behavior that is frightening to other members of the staff."

Harrington still teaches at Valley one night a week, but doesn't know if she will ever come back full time. "What I hope for the campus is that we're given some kind of tools because there were so many people [that day], and only Jeanne really intervened, because they didn't know what to do," said Harrington. "We should have some kind of training so we know what to do when these events happen."

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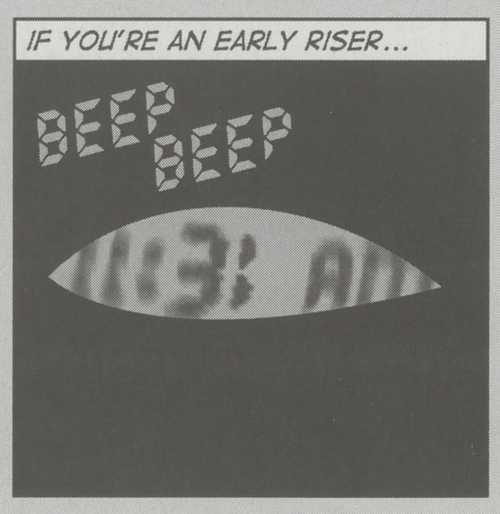

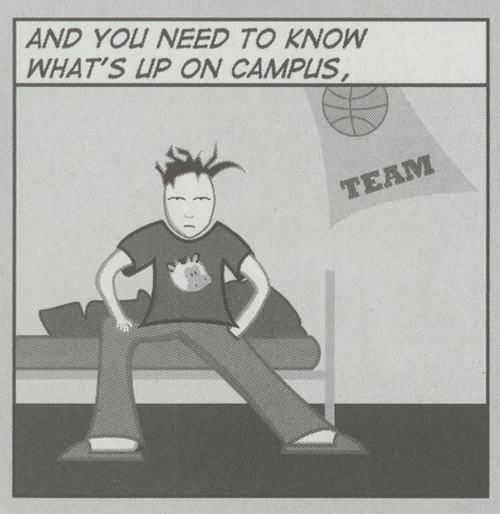

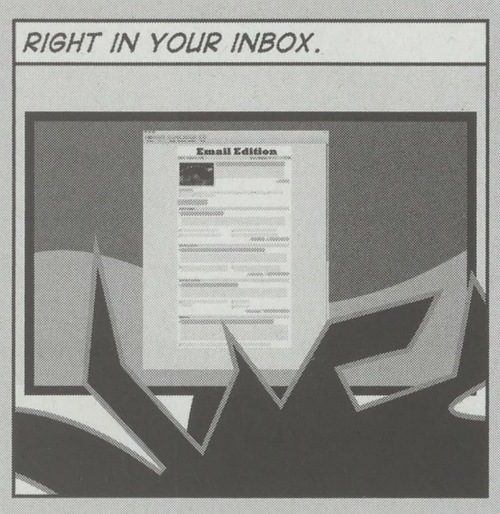

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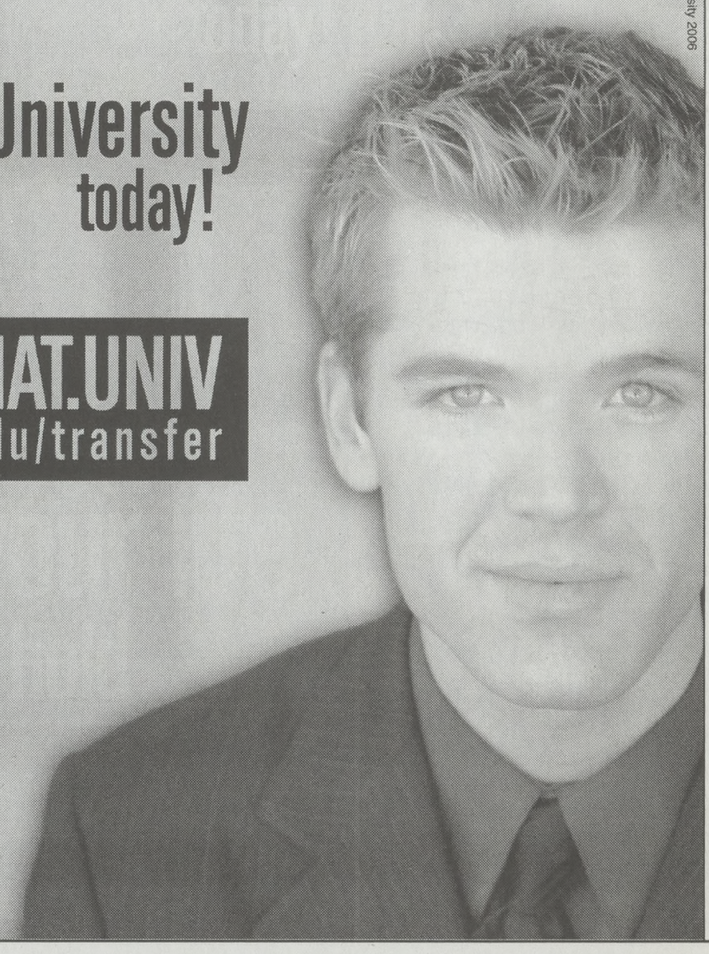

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VALLEY LIFE

WEDNESDAY TO TUESDAY

Wednesday, Oct. 25

Hawthorne Heights headlines the Nintendo Fusion Tour at the Wiltern LG; 3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles; $25; 6 P.M.

Thursday, Oct. 26

The Bloomingdale's Shopping Benefit will celebrate 10 local charities with a day of shopping; Bloomingdale's at Sherman Oaks, Beverly Center, and Century City; $10 @ the door, 100% of the proceeds benefiting the charities.

Friday, Oct. 27

Urban Death: Blood Transfusion! ZJU Theatre, 4850 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood; 8 p.m. $10

Saturday, Oct. 28

Snoop Dogg @ Key Club At Morongo, 29500 Seminole Dr, Cabazon, CA; 8 p.m. $65; 18+

Sunday, Oct. 29

OK Go @ Troubadour; 9081 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA; 8 p.m. $20

Monday, Oct. 30

Halloween Harvest Festival. Pierce College, 6498 DeSoto Avenue, Woodland Hills, CA 91367; $12-20, 10 a.m. - 10 p.m

Tuesday, Oct. 31

West Hollywood Costume Carnaval @Santa Monica Boulevard, between La Cienega and Doheny. Free.

Career/Transfer Corner

Wednesday, Oct. 25
UC Irvine Representative
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Woodbury Information Fair
(Monarch Square)
10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
How To Transfer Workshop
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 26
CSU Northridge Info Fair
(Monarch Square)
10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 7 p.m.
CSU Application Workshop
1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 30
UC Santa Barbara
Representative
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 31
CSU Northridge Representative
10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 7 p.m.
How to Transfer Workshop
1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 1
Personal Statement Workshop
1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. H 102
(must sign-up in career/transfer center prior to workshop)
CSULA Rep 4 - 7 p.m.
How to Transfer Workshop
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Sign up now at the Career/ Transfer Center for the UCLA Transfer Conference (November 7), 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. There will be a free bus.

All activities in Career/ Transfer Center (adm. 126) unless otherwise noted. Call (818) 947-2646 for further information.

CD REVIEW

Diddy Says, "Press Play"

Sean "Diddy" Combs "Press Play"
Bad Boy

★★★ out of 5

BY ELEARY S. NIXON
STAFF WRITER

Rapper and business mogul, Sean "Diddy" Combs is back with his second album "Press Play," a Hip-Hop and Soul compilation that will inevitably fall short of rap praiseworthiness.

Diddy's rap-vocals come across weak and unconvincing, however with the slew of superb guest artists his inexperience as a rapper is well hidden.

Urban music's greatest entrepreneur, "Diddy," has released his second album after five years, a collection of 19 tracks that took nearly two years to create. Why such a long brake? Sean Combs who this year professionally changed his name to "Diddy," has spent the last five years filming "Making The Band," hitting the department stores with his clothing line Sean John (with a retail estimate of $400-million a year, according to a recent New York Times report), producing gold and platinum selling artists, and more recently inking a very lucrative fragrance contract with Estée Lauder to promote his number one selling men's cologne, "Unforgivable."

If this all seems short of amazing, this music mastermind has also prompted acting into his resume, with a role in the 2001 Oscar awarded film "Monster's Ball," and more recently signed on as a character in the Broadway play "A Raisin In the Sun," set to hit production in spring 2007.

Beyond the entrepreneurship and the acting gigs is Diddy's passion for music. Since 1990, Diddy has been a leader in music's transition from promoting artists like the "Queen of Hip-Hop Soul" Mary J. Blige, the late rap-phenomenon Notorious B.I.G., and his current numberone debuting, five-member female singing group Danity Kane. However, it's Diddy's turn to take music by its beat, and provide a collage of great sounds with amazing featured artists.

In "Press Play," Diddy's testimonial and two interludes provide the great imagery, leaving 16 tracks to sit-back and relax to. There are no clear break-out hits on this album, but there are various featured artists such as Mary J. Blige, Brandy, Nas, Ciara, Christina Aguilera, Jamie Fox and Nicole Scherzinger of The Pussycat Dolls, who help propel this music endeavor to unexpected but still minimal rap-worthiness. The guest producers that spawned all the tight beats and well-blended instrumentals are Kanye West, Pharrell, and Will.i.am.

see '*Diddy*' page 5

DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

FREE SUNDAES ON SUNDAY - Valley College President Tyree Wieder helps scoop free sundaes at The Museum of the San Fernando Valley's re-opening at Valley College on Sunday.

Speech Team Beats Competition

■ The Valley College Forensics team excels at tournament at Azusa Pacfic University.

BY JESSICA SHAFFER
STAFF WRITER

The Valley College Forensics Team was the number one community college at Azusa Pacific University speech and debate tournament this weekend with members winning 14 awards.

"The rest of the team did amazingly well, especially the new people," said Lucy Boyahdzyan, one-year veteran team member and winner of first place for persuasion and fourth place for informative speaking. "They just won all the awards."

There were more than 25 colleges and universities competing including UC Berkeley, UCLA and Cal State LA. This was the first official tournament of the year for the forensics team.

"This was a very big high profile university tournament and we came out really strong," said Co-director of the Forensics Team and Speech Professor Duane Smith. "Usually it takes us all year to get to that point. We got a bunch of hard-working, motivated students and we've started off strong"

Valley also won a sweepstakes trophy or first place trophy in the tournament as a team because they won the most awards.

Read the full article online at LAValleyStar.com

MOVIE REVIEW

"Let Them Eat Eye Candy"

"Marie Antoinette"
Director: Sophia Coppola
Features: Kirsten Dunst and Jason Schwartzman

★★★ out of 5

BY SCARLETT YINGVORAPANT
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

The breathtaking visuals in Sophia Coppola's "Marie Antoinette" are captivating enough to be the sole reason to watch the film and disregard Kirsten Dunst's terrible acting.

Written and directed by Coppola, "Marie Antoinette" is a lighthearted quasi-modern retelling of one of the most tragic and notable figures in French history. It begins with the young Austrian princess and future dauphine's move into the Versailles palace and slowly unravels into the decadence in which she immersed herself. The movie moves at an extremely slow crawl, but it is very reflective of the boredom the young queen felt before and during her reign.

Coppola spends more time showing the hedonism and indulgence of Marie Antoinette (Dunst) and her husband Louis XVI (Jason Schwartzman), than showing historical accuracy in the plotline. She neglects the key reason this teen queen is so notable in the first place - her beheading, which has caused a backlash of criticism of the movie from angry historians.

The movie is worth watching for costume design alone. Coppola also made a wise directorial decision choosing Milena Canonero as her costume designer. Canonero has five Oscar nominations and two Oscar wins for best costume design, making "Marie Antoinette" a shoe-in for at least one Oscar nomination. Coppola also hired Spanish fashion designer Manolo Blahnik (whose shoes normally sell for upwards of $700 a pair) to specially design hundreds of shoes specifically for the movie, a dream for fashionistas everywhere. However, because the costumes play such a central role, "Marie Antoinette" could have been directed or written by any other person to the same effect.

Schwartzman's characterization of a simple minded, slightly dim-witted Louis XVI is comical and delightful. However, Dunst fails to live up to such an iconic character. She has no control over her voice, which inconsistently starts with a "valley-girl" accent then falls flat with every line. It's a blessing that most of the script is inaudible whispering from minor characters of the cast gossiping about the queen, because every time Dunst has a line with more than two words, the dream-like atmosphere filled with gorgeous dresses and sumptuous cakes is rudely interrupted.

COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES // PHOTO CREDIT: LEIGH JOHNSON

Although Coppola has worked with Dunst before (on "The Virgin Suicides"), had Coppola chosen a different and more talented leading actress with whom she has worked with (Scarlett Johansson of "Lost in Translation") the movie would have been a bigger success. "The Prestige," which opened this past weekend and stars the aforementioned Johansson, shot to number one at the box office while Marie Antoinette opened in eighth.

see '*Marie*' page 5

BOOK REVIEW

"Abundance" Worth Reading

"Abundance"
Author: Sena Jeter Naslund
Publisher: William Morrow-

★★★★ out of 5

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

Many historians portray Marie Antoinette, the wife of King Louis XVI, as a selfish, spoiled and self-absorbed woman who cared so little for the suffering peasants that she exclaimed, "Let them eat cake!" when the lower classes were starving because of the high cost of bread. Sena Jeter Naslund instead paints a much more complex picture of the queen. Naslund's "Abundance" tells Marie Antoinette's story from her "birth as a citizen of France" until the moment before her beheading by guillotine, making her yet another victim of the Reign of Terror that was the French Revolution.

Using Marie Antoinette's correspondence with her mother, the Empress of Austria, and others as well as the accounts of people who had known the queen, she becomes a woman and not simply a pampered royal. Because she is a devoted wife, mother, and queen who genuinely loves the people of France, she is someone readers can relate to. Surprisingly, Naslund was able to make even Marie Antoinette a sympathetic character; she is a young, naive woman who is tragically the victim of circumstances.

Although "Abundance" is historical fiction, it is not a dense, hard to read piece of literature. Naslund's writing is full of vivid imagery and is a pleasure to read. Although the hefty 541-page book is a bit daunting at first, the quality of the writing makes the pages fly by.

One of the most fascinating aspects of this novel was the depiction of life in eighteenth century Europe. Not only do we get a behind-the-scenes look at the politics of the European monarchies, but we also see how unglamorous everyday life was for the inhabitants of Versailles.

Since history is told by the people who won, in this case by the architects of the French Revolution, it is interesting to see the events leading up to the outbreak of revolution from the point of view of the royal family. This fresh take on the reign of Louis XVI and the revolution is part of what makes this novel such a compelling read.

"Abundance: A Novel of Marie Antoinette" (Hardcover) is available at Amazon.com and other major bookstores.

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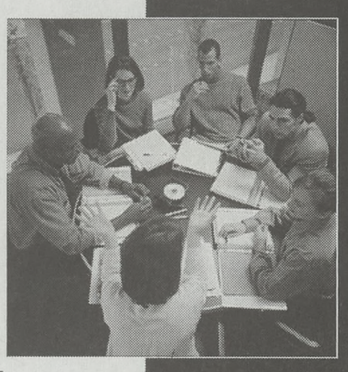

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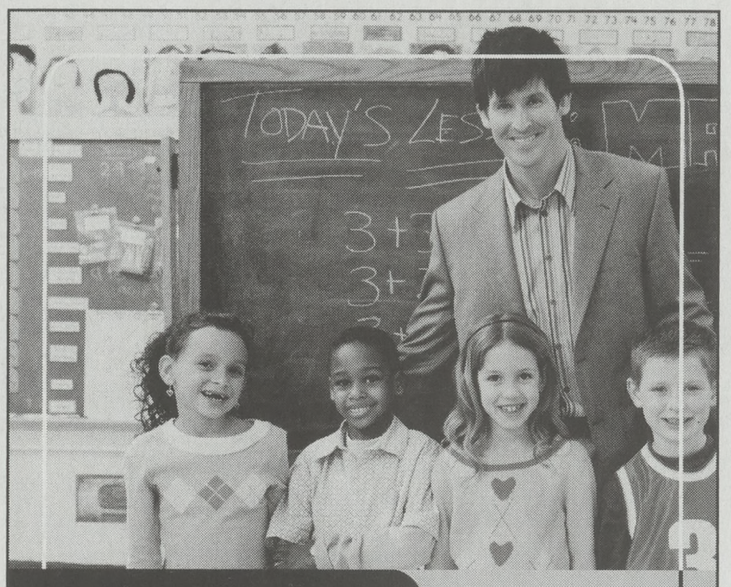
Knowledge • Service • Vision

'Marie'

continued from page 4

The soundtrack that Coppola chose for the movie, full of modern rock music, includes New Order, The Cure, The Strokes, and Aphex Twin. The soundtrack is an amazing standalone CD, but its use in the movie is overbearing. They are all fun, albeit unusual choices, however some of these songs seem more out of place than quirky.

The profound, modern adaptation Sophia Coppola was attempting to create is lacking in almost every way. Marie Antoinette is complete proof that costuming and set designing can save a failing movie.



teaching tip • 9 **Superheroes don't always wear capes.**

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0806

'Diddy'

continued from page 4

Stand out tracks on this album are "Come to Me" featuring Nicole Scherzinger, which is the first release single off the album, "Everything I Love" featuring Nas, and "Tell Me" featuring Christina Aguilera. "Press Play" lacks finesse and iconic status that rap revolutionary's Jay-Z and Notorious B.I.G so adamantly showcased on their records. Diddy's rap-vocals come across weak and unconvincing, however with the slew of superb guest artists his inexperience as a rapper is well hidden. This is probably why only two of the 16 full-length tracks are solo attempts by Diddy; all other standard tracks, including an interlude, have a featured artist.

Although "Press Play" will not be an industry smash, it does provide beats that anyone with a musical-ear can catch and groove to. The foreseen commercial crash of this album shouldn't weigh Diddy down for too long, as the expectation of twins by long-time girlfriend Kim Porter will surely lift his spirits.

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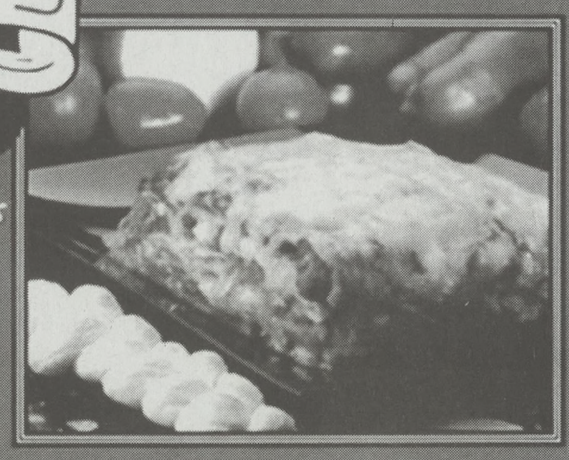

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LAVC SCORES

Football
Allen Hancock College
@ LAVC
(L 48-31)
Football Record: 1-5, 0-4

Woman's Soccer
@ Santa Monica
(Tie 2-2)
Soccer Record: 3-11-2, 0-9-2

Woman's Water Polo
@ Cuesta
(L 18-2)
Women's Water Polo Record: 0-21, 0-3

Men's Water Polo
@ Cuesta
(L 6-9)
Men's Water Polo Record: 12-5, 2-

LAVC SCHEDULE

Wednesday 10/25/06

Men's Water Polo
@ Ventura
3 p.m.

Women's Water Polo
@ Ventura 4:30 p.m.

Thursday 10/26/06

No Scheduled Games

Friday 10/27/06

Women's Soccer
@ Pierce
4 p.m.

Saturday 10/28/06

Football
@ Santa Barbara
4 p.m.

Sunday 10/29/06

No Scheduled Games

Monday 10/30/06

No Scheduled Games

Tuesday 10/31/06

Women's Soccer
@ Bakersfield
3 p.m.

For more sport photos and stories, please visit www.lavalleystar.com

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Lady Monarchs Play Top Team to a Draw

By Tony Silva
Staff Writer

After a tough start this season, the Valley College Women's soccer team have put themselves in a position to still qualify for the playoffs with an impressive 2-2 draw against Santa Monica College, who are currently No. 1 in their conference.

The game started out very evenly with both teams creating plenty of scoring chances, but it wasn't until the last minute of the first half when the action really began. The Lady Monarchs exhibited great teamwork, with midfielder Michelle Escamilla running down from center field with a perfectly-timed pass to Krystle Sanchez, who took a shot at the left corner of the net and scored the game's first goal.

"We were playing awesome today," said Sanchez. "Coming in to the game we were aware that Santa Monica was number one in our conference and knew that if we can manage beat them we can most likely beat the rest of our remaining opponents."

The advantage created Sanchez's goal was short, as Santa Monica tied the score a minute later on an exciting breakaway goal that hit the left post before landing inside the goal. Santa Monica's goal sent the game into halftime tied 1-1.

The second half saw the Monarchs create plenty of scoring chances, taking the most shots on goal, but it was Santa Monica that capitalized off one of their very few chances to break away from the defense and counter-attacked in the 70th minute to take a 2-1 lead.

The Lady Monarchs continued attacking and their persistence finally paid off when Escamilla was able to break away from most of the Santa Monica defense and score the game-tying goal from about 10 yards out in the 86th minute. Escamilla's goal led to an impressive 2-2 final score against a top team.

Valley's strong overall performance left head coach Erick Archilla with a positive outlook for the remaining games.

"It was a very exciting game from the beginning," said Archilla "We could have done better as far as finishing the plays goes, we just had so many chances to score in the second half that it could have easily been 3-2 in our favor. But Santa Monica is a great team, and if we continue to improve I'm sure we'll put ourselves in a better position to make it to the playoffs this season"

The next games for the Lady Monarchs will be on Oct. 24 at College of the Canyons at 4pm and then on Oct. 27 they host Pierce College also at 4 p.m.

Daniel Kane / Valley Star

CLASH ON THE FIELD - Lady Monarch Jessica Amaya battles hard for the ball Friday against Santa Monica College forward Tatiana Aguirre. The game ended in a 2-2 draw, making the Lady Monarchs record 3-11, 2 draws.

FOOTBALL

Bulldogs Take a Bite Out of Monarchs, Win 48-31

By Jovany S. Diaz
Staff Writer

Alex Fayvil / Valley Star

OUT OF WAY - Valley College wide receiver Raymond Johnson straight-arms an Allan Hancock Bulldog defender. The Monarchs lost the game 48-31.

The Valley College Monarchs fought hard against the Allen Hancock College Bulldogs Saturday night, in a homecoming game that saw five lead changes and a combined score of 79 points that eventually fell in the visitor's favor.

Throughout most of the game the Monarchs were able to keep the Bulldogs in check, until a Valley fumble late in the third quarter changed the game's momentum and helped the Bulldogs defeat the Monarchs 48-31.

"This is one of the best games we played all year," a confident Coach Jimmy Sims said after the game. "But the fumble turned it around."

On the opening drive of the game, the Bulldogs scored six points, going 74 yards in nine plays. One second later, Monarchs' sophomore Garrett Feig responded by returning the ensuing kickoff 95 yards for a touchdown, giving the Monarchs a 7-6 lead.

Valley freshman Rene Renteria added nine more points with three field goals, including one from 52 yards. The Bulldogs managed to find the end zone twice more before the ending of the half, sending the Monarchs into the break down 20-16.

In the third quarter, Monarchs' freshman running back Anthony Dickson broke through the Bulldogs' defense for a 63-yard gain. Renteria added another field goal on the next possession for the Monarchs, putting the home team up 25-20. It was the last time the Monarchs would have the lead.

Late in the third quarter, freshman Valley quarterback Will Cowan lead a charge deep into Bulldogs territory hoping to take control of the game, before a turnover shifted the momentum in the Bulldogs favor.

The Bulldogs then blitzed the Monarchs by scoring four touchdowns in four minutes to put the game beyond reach. A fourth quarter touchdown from sophomore wide out Raymond Johnson injected some hope into the game, but time soon ran out and the Monarchs lost, dropping their record to 1-6 overall.

"I'm really proud of our team," said Sims said to his players. "We can build on this."

The Monarchs' defense held the Bulldogs to 97 yards passing and forced three turnovers.

The Monarchs face the Santa Barbara Vaqueros next week at 4 p.m. in Santa Barbara.

VALLEY PEOPLE

Escamilla Leads Lady Monarchs, Inspires Teammates

By Tony Silva
Staff Writer

Students at Valley College might have seen Michelle Escamilla around campus kicking her soccer ball everywhere she goes. Those of you who don't know her might think that she's just a fan of the game, or when she's sporting her school jersey you might think that she's just another member of Valley's soccer team. But the truth is that she is much more than just another soccer player.

A full–time student dealing with all the stress that comes with the busy schedule, Escamilla has managed to make the most of her time to do what she loves most; improve her game and become one of the best female soccer players in Southern California's Community College system. Not only is she the best player on the Lady Monarchs, she is also the engine and the heart of the team, contributing with some of the best plays in every game that the Lady Monarchs have played thus far.

"Whenever she steps onto the field, Michelle gives 110 percent of her talents. She's obviously the best player in our conference and every coach in the area knows that," said Coach Erick Archila. "Hopefully, she'll get the best player of the year award for the conference, because she is that good and no one deserves it more than her." Escamilla was born in Los Angeles almost 19 years ago. Her parents came from El Salvador just a few years before. She started out her soccer career as an attacking-midfielder when she attended school at an all-girl Catholic High School in Los Angeles. She played soccer there for three years and won the most valuable player award every single year. Then in her senior year of High School she transferred to University High School where she also played soccer and once again won the MVP award during that season. So far she's had a dominant college career as well. This year alone, Escamilla has scored 11 goals and she now averages about a goal per game. Last year she had such a dominant season that she was awarded with an athletic scholarship to go to Cal State Northridge as soon as she transfers from Valley sometime next year. "I've been playing this game since I was 5 years old, and as I was growing my love for soccer grew more in my life," said Escamilla. "I enjoy every minute I'm out there playing for Valley." Escamilla says coming to Valley was an essential step toward reaching her goals, both academically and with her soccer career. "That is the main reason why I began my career [at Valley]," said Escamilla. "I knew that going to college was very important and playing soccer here was going to get me a chance to get scouted and possibly get a scholarship to go to a University. [That's] something that I'm proud to have accomplished at this point in my life." Her teammates at Valley couldn't be happier to have someone like Michelle, or "Shelly" as they all refer to her, be such a standout for the team this year. "She is a natural player period," said defensive midfielder Jenny Portillo. "Ever since we started playing last year I saw that she was very skilled in the game of soccer and she is only getting better." The 3-11 Lady Monarchs are hopeful that along with Escamilla's skill and their work, they can win all 5 of their remaining games and make a playoff run this year. "We've just got to give her more chances to be open and continue to keep scoring goals for us," said Portillo. "[If we do that] we have a better chance to make it to the playoffs this season, so far she's been number one when it comes to that." The rest of her teammates know that if they do make it to the playoffs it will be mainly because they can count on the experience and leadership that Escamilla brings to the table. With three more regular season games remaining, the possibility is still alive. "I strongly believe that the reason why I stand out on the team is because I have a lot of ball control and I give it my all when I'm out their on the field," said Escamilla. "If we continue to improve during the next couple of weeks then we should be able to get some positive results out of these next games" As far as her own future, Escamilla said that she would love to get a chance to play soccer at a professional level, perhaps in the U.S. Women's League if she gets the opportunity. If that doesn't happen, Escamilla said she would settle with being a pre-school teacher and possibly continue to play soccer on some level. You never know, with the kind of talent she has, it wouldn't be a surprise to see her in the Women's World Cup in the near future.

"Whenever she steps onto the field, Michelle gives 110 percent of her talents. She's obviously the best player in our Conference and every coach in the area knows that."

- Erick Archilla
Head Coach

Daniel Kane / Valley Star

FULL SPEED AHEAD - Valley College student Michelle Escamilla is the Lady Monarchs' star athlete, having scored 11 goals this season.